

MTA NEWS



Monthly Employee
News From The
Los Angeles County
Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

AUGUST ISSUE

To the Students, MTA's Beatrice Lee is TOPs in their Book

A LOOK AT MTA'S TRANSPORTATION OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM

Beatrice Lee gets plenty of cards on her birthday and Mother's Day. But not all of them are from her kids. The thanks come from dozens of students whose lives she's been enriching for the last five years. But Lee, always graceful, credits the kids themselves and the spirit of the program she administers — Transportation Occupations Program, or TOP.

Funded by the MTA, the novel educational program provides 11th and 12th grade students with specialized instruction and on-the-job training in the design and construction of major rail transportation projects. More than 250 students, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds, have benefitted from the specialized job training offered by Rail Construction Corporation (RCC) consultants and contractors.

"We've been to New York and Boston and we haven't come across a program like ours," the former adult vocational school teacher notes.

"For many, this is their first job opportunity. The students work all year long at extra coursework related to transportation-related fields. The summer jobs give them the hands-on experience that rounds out the TOP curriculum."

TOP had its roots in 1985 with the Compton Unified School District. It soon expanded to the Long Beach and Los Angeles school districts. But by 1988, it had fallen through the cracks within the LAUSD — and to a lesser extent at the two other districts — and Lee was

given the nod to rebuild the program.

She started by zeroing in on recruitment tactics and devising a strategy for busing the students to an off-site facility. Then she went to work with LAUSD administrators. Her colleague Naomi Nightingale-Keyes, who wrote a superb course outline, helped her make things happen. Unbelievably, Lee pulled the whole works together in one month's time.

"But without the students, you don't have the program," says the mother of two. "So I went into the schools to convey the message that to us, it's not the IQ that matters, it's the 'I will' — if these kids are willing to attend classes on Saturday, if they want to go to

See Beatrice Lee page 6

MTA's Metro Access Helps One of its Own

Barbara Trigg doesn't like to think about what could happen if her car breaks down on the San Bernardino Freeway to and from work.

Not that each one of us hasn't worried about a similar scenario, but the circumstances of the human resources clerk are different.

Disabled by a rare congenital disorder that afflicts only 300 people in the world, the vivacious El Monte resident is confined to a wheelchair and drives a specially-equipped car that allows her to brake and accelerate by hand.

See Metro Access page 4



Beatrice Lee



Clara Potes-Fellow

INSIDE

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A Message from Franklin White



Franklin White

In my continuing effort to improve the communications process, I invite you to send me written questions that I will respond to in this space starting next month. I believe this is an excellent way to keep the flow of information going between us on a regular basis.

I encourage you to write me with questions on the merger, MTA policy or other concerns of general interest to all employees. Each month, I plan to select letters to print and answer in this column.

I may edit or combine the letters in order to answer as many as possible. Only a portion of a letter may be used, but I will do my best to preserve the integrity of all letters printed. In researching the answer to a letter, I may seek information from other staff members.

You don't have to sign your name, but I would encourage you to do so if you would like a personal reply.

I look forward to receiving your letters. I want to know what's on your mind and I want you to know how I feel about the important issues facing the MTA.

On July 10, I had the pleasure of attending our annual MTA Bus Rodeo Competition at Santa Anita, where I was able to meet many of you in a more relaxed setting. I must say, I was extremely impressed with the quality of bus driving and engine diagnostic work I witnessed. Merger concerns seemed far away among the festive, supportive atmosphere of the Rodeo. I felt I was experiencing the best of what I know MTA can be.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TRANSIT BUS (ATTB) MOVES FORWARD

There are other positive events taking place. Last month, Sen. Barbara Boxer threw her total support behind our Advanced Technology Transit Bus (ATTB), or "Stealth Bus," project. This is a major victory for MTA and Northrop Corporation, which is working with

us to design the lightweight, low-floor bus that could turn out to be the standard bus of the future. With Sen. Boxer's help, we hope to get the necessary funding for all phases of the project that could bring needed jobs to Southern California.

NEW APPOINTEES TO MTA BOARD

I hope you all join me in welcoming Mayor Richard Riordan's two new appointees to the MTA Board. In addition to Chairman Richard Alatorre, who will continue on the Board as one of the four Los Angeles representatives, Mayor Riordan appointed Mel Wilson and Stan Sanders. I look forward to working with them.

RAIL RIDERSHIP IS UP

Our rail services continue to post healthy ridership numbers. Blue Line ridership is exceeding all expectations by hovering around 40,000 each weekday. The first segment of the Red Line, which marked its six month anniversary July 30, has averaged about 12,000 to 13,000 riders each day, and Metrolink ridership is growing as it expands. It is clear that Los Angeles County residents are getting the message about how convenient our system can be.

COMMITMENT TO CRUSH GRAFFITI

Another message we want to send is our commitment to eliminating graffiti and overcrowding on our buses. Our budget for 1994 contains \$7 million to help combat graffiti, and money to field extra buses to reduce overcrowding.

I cannot express enough how much I appreciate the dedication of all of you, who continue providing some of the best public transportation service in the nation as we go through the arduous merger process. I commend you for it. ■

"I invite you to send me written questions that I will respond to in this space starting next month."

Bus Operator Develops Flash Card Program for the Visually-Impaired

PILOT PROGRAM IS UNIQUE IN THE COUNTRY

Francisco Gabaldon remembers the elderly gentleman he picked up in front of Lincoln High School on Broadway.

The man rode his Line 45 bus every day to Chinatown. But since he spoke Chinese and not a word of English, Gabaldon was unable to ask if his was the bus he wanted. Then, he noticed the man's neck. Around it, hung a chain with a card that had the black bold numbers "45."

"What a neat idea," thought the operator who had compiled 18 years in the transportation business. "The cards would be an ideal way for operators and patrons who can't communicate to do so."

Recently, Gabaldon happened on a discussion between planners about the Americans with Disabilities Act. One of them wanted to know what things could be done to make it easier for visually-impaired patrons to locate their bus.

Immediately, Gabaldon thought of his encounter with the Chinese patron months before.

Gabaldon argued that if a visually-impaired person could stand on the street holding a card with the line number printed on it, the operator would know from afar what bus he was looking for and, if it was the correct one, stop.

"You wouldn't believe the number of times a blind person who carries a cane folds it up when he or she is waiting for the bus," he says.

After receiving the go-ahead, Gabaldon put together a pilot program that included 18 of the District's bus lines. He contacted the Braille Institute's Robert Perrone and Don Fisher, who coordinated the program from that end. Working with the MTA Print

Shop, Gabaldon assembled white index cards, three by six inches apiece, that were laminated.

"Then we tested the cards at Instruction in El Monte," he said. "The instructor had 20/40 uncorrected vision which is the minimum for any

operator. He could see the cards from 240 feet, which is six bus lengths."

With Planner Kevin Chen at his side, the program, the first of its kind in the country, was launched.

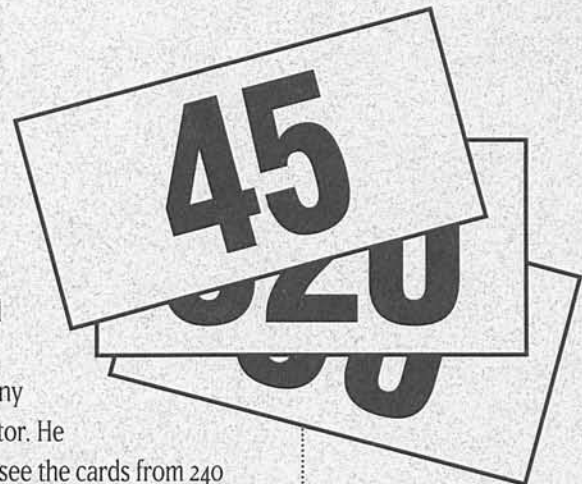
The two put together a survey, which was returned by more than 150 operators at the involved division. Not one indicated displeasure with the program.

"I put myself in their shoes," says Gabaldon. "I'm very fortunate — I don't have any physical disabilities. So, if I can make things a little easier for someone, I'm happy to do so."

Meantime, the Customer Relations Department has received letters from patrons applauding the flash card program.

As for Gabaldon, he has big ideas about the program's future. "I'm hoping that it will be implemented system-wide and eventually will be able to benefit the elderly," he says.

In the meantime, he and colleague Karen Heit are preparing a paper for the Transportation Research Board in Washington, D.C., about MTA's latest success story. ■



"What a neat idea... The cards would be an ideal way for operators and patrons who can't communicate to do so."



MTA employees Barbara Trigg and Jami Carrington with Metro Access van driver.

METRO ACCESS FROM PAGE 1

"If my car broke down, I couldn't move too well," she says from her chair, and then adds with a chuckle, "And if I got out of the car, I would probably get mowed down by traffic."

Barbara's anxiety was eased last December when she read an advertisement in a local newspaper about Metro Access — a complimentary paratransit program for people whose disabilities prevent them from boarding, riding, or disembarking from an accessible fixed route bus or rail system. Like everyone else, she now has the option to choose public transit.

Unbeknownst to Barbara at the time, the service was administered by her MTA colleagues of the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), across town in the 818 Building.

Required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, the service began operating as a demonstration project in the East San Gabriel Valley in September 1991. Today it serves 29 cities, with additional service provided to a limited portion of San Bernardino County and downtown Los Angeles. Unlike Dial-a-Ride service which limits service to the city in which it is based, Metro Access will carry the patron anywhere within the service area as long as the route mirrors that or comes within 3/4 of a mile of a regularly sched-

uled bus or train. The cost is \$1.50 each way for trips of 15 miles or less.

According to the MTA's Jami Carrington, Metro Access program manager for the San Gabriel Valley, the contracted service will be phased in and implemented throughout the entire county by 1997.

"The movement of disabled persons is very complex," says Carrington, who used to be the operations manager for Laidlaw Transit and focused much attention on the movement of disabled youth. "It takes a certain understanding of how the disabled community relies on us for getting them to work.

"If I have any one joy about my position, it's that by

coordinating Metro Access, we are giving the disabled the opportunity to access life!"

The curb-to-curb service, which won rave reviews in a recent user survey, has been a lifesaver for approximately 8,000 San Gabriel Valley residents, like Trigg, who rely on it for shopping, doctor's appointments, and

visiting friends. It operates during the hours the bus lines in a particular area run. So, in many cases, service is provided seven days a week, 24 hours a day. On July 26, Metro Access was extended into East Los Angeles.

Trigg, who now uses the service every day to get to work at the 425 Building, first had to be certified by a specially trained Metro Access evaluator before she could use it. The program provides free transportation to and from the interviews, which are held at local senior centers, rehabilitation centers, hospitals and other community sites.

Along with a rider's packet on rules and regulations, Trigg was given restricted eligibility, which means that she can use the service only on those trips which she

"If I have any one joy about my position, it's that by coordinating Metro Access we're giving the disabled the opportunity to access life!"

Three-Quarters of Bus Fleet to Be Free of Graffiti by End of Fiscal Year



Sixty-three percent of the MTA bus fleet will be graffiti-free by the end of the next fiscal year — that's the bold word from Steve Jaffe, vice-chairman of the agency's newly formed Anti-Graffiti Task Force.

Signaling its commitment to the zero-tolerance program, the MTA Board has earmarked another \$7 million for graffiti abatement this year. The new funding means that the zero-tolerance program will be expanded to include another four bus operating divisions — Divisions 5 (South Central), 10 (East Los Angeles), 15 (Sun Valley), and 18 (Carson). It brings to seven the number of divisions on which any graffiti applied during a run is removed within one round trip, or the bus is removed from service until it is clean.

Also, buses at four other divisions — 3 (Cypress Park), 7 (West Hollywood), 8 (Chatsworth), and 9 (El Monte) — will be included in the program if the lines on which they are run are shared by the primary divisions.

"Approximately 1,508 buses will be free of graffiti by next June," says Jaffe. "It will amount to 75 percent of the buses we run during peak hours."

"Approximately 1,508 buses will be free of graffiti by next June."

Key to the program's success is the commitment by the Amalgamated Transportation

Union to allow seven teams of 35 youths each to work at bus terminals scrubbing the buses. The teens come from Los Angeles County Probation camps.

The program will be phased in over the next 10 months. ■

How About a Library Tour?

If you're interested in knowing more about the MTA library, which houses this country's third largest transportation collection, why not schedule a tour?

Librarian Dorothy Gray has set aside the 10 a.m. hour every Thursday for staff tours. She'll explain interlibrary loan procedures, automated catalogues, and computer literature searching. Also available for viewing are historical documents and bus passes dating back to 1890 as well as photographs from the 1920s.

Call Gray at 2-4859 to register for a tour. ■

Big Heart

Mark October 15 for Mechanic Rigo Banuelos' ninth annual benefit dinner dance for the homeless of Apozol in the state of Zacatecas, Mexico. The 20-year veteran mechanic, with generous support from his Division 10 colleagues and manager Milo Victoria, collects more than \$2,000 for groceries that he brings to the destitute. Why does he do it? "One day, many years ago, someone knocked on my door and left a basket on my doorstep," he says. "My heart said, 'I don't need this.' So I gave it to the homeless. That was the sign from above." The dinner will be held at Casa Latina in Rosemead. ■



Rigo Banuelos

Lost and Found

When MTA Bus Operator John Urrutia recently spotted a mentally retarded girl on his Line 68 bus who looked lost, the father of two promptly alerted dispatchers that his patron needed help. As it turned out, the police had issued an all-points bulletin for the teenager who had disappeared from her board and care facility earlier in the day. The operator, who hails from Murietta in Riverside County, comforted her until the authorities arrived. Urrutia, who works out of Division 10, says he enjoys helping as many of his passengers as he can. ■



John Urrutia

MTA Employees Volunteer for California Special Olympics

by Frances Cortes, Real Estate-Property Management

During the last weekend in June, a group of MTA employees was very busy volunteering at the California Special Olympics Summer Games, held at the UCLA campus in Westwood.



From left: Stuart Ondeck, Kathleen Sanchez, Frances Cortes, Howard Hawkes, and Maureen Smith.

Participants included the following staffers from the Real Estate Property Management Department: Frances Cortes, Howard Hawkes, Maureen Lucey-Smith, Stuart Ondeck (with a niece), and Kathleen Sanchez (with her husband, two daughters, and members of her Girl Scout Troop). Also participating was Lisa Carter (with her son) from

the Contracts Accounting Department.

The MTA group was led by Frances Cortes, who has been a volunteer coordinator for the Games for six years. She gladly welcomes inquiries about involvement in the Special Olympics, and was very grateful to her colleagues for helping to make this year's Games a

BEATRICE LEE FROM PAGE 1

off-site facilities, then they'll pull up their grade point averages. If they're willing to do all this, you've got the incentive."

Javiar Robles of Highland Park had more than incentive. In fact, he is one of the program's biggest success stories. The Highland Park youth who just graduated from Franklin High School is spending his summer at the city Bureau of Engineering drawing intersections, taking measurements and installing curb ramps that eventually will be the mainstay throughout all of Los Angeles County.

"I think the program is great," he says. "And I'm get-

ting a lot of experience in engineering. I feel especially good about that because my father used to be involved in that kind of work and now he's disabled. Both my mom and dad are on welfare."

success. Special Olympics provides sports training and competition for children and adults with mental retardation.

The volunteers put in long days. Duties were varied, including being assigned to a team and functioning as team liaisons between the coaches and the tournament people; assisting athletes with sunblock, water, and lunches; making team banners, pom poms, and a balloon arch for the closing ceremonies. Most importantly, they were there to provide spirit for the athletes, along with plenty of high fives and hugs.

Teams from all over the state participated as they do every year. Medals and ribbons were handed out, but all the athletes were clearly winners.

It was a weekend of long hours and hard work under the hot sun, but was surely one of the most fun and rewarding weekends a volunteer can have. Judging by the wonderful feelings MTA volunteers walked away with, it isn't clear who the bigger winners were — the athletes or the volunteers!

Editor's Note: If you're interested in volunteering for next year's Special Olympics, give Frances a ring at 4-6386. ■



"My message is that
It's not the IQ that matters,
it's the IQ — I will."

One month from now, Robles will head to college. Sporting a 3.89 GPA, he was accepted into the Massachusetts Institute of Technology last spring.

"Seeing a change in their attitudes, seeing young people get excited and believing in opportunity makes you happy," says Lee. "The most gratifying thing you do in life is doing something for somebody else." ■

Spotlight on Miriam Simmons: Running Beyond the Wall

by Seth Walsh, Human Resources

Public Affairs Manager Miriam Simmons doesn't fit the profile of your typical marathon runner. She's not whippet thin with long legs that will eat up the pavement on the 26-plus brutal miles of a marathon. What she does have in common with other marathoners is positive thinking, an uncommon ability for staying focused and a quiet determination to see things through the tough times.

"I wasn't encouraged to run back in high school," the former CORO fellow says. "I was a tomboy, but I didn't look like a runner and the coach said he didn't want me on the team. Running was a dream of mine, but I had to put it on the shelf for while."

Miriam didn't give up that dream and many years later in New York City while watching the marathon she had a startling revelation that eventually led to action.

"Looking down from my window I'd see people of all different ages and colors and sizes. Everybody's not what they show you on TV and not everybody's trying to win. I realized that for a lot of people the marathon is an inner struggle — it's about pushing yourself and your limits. It's about believing in yourself. I tucked that away and said to myself, 'one day, one day.'"

Years later, Miriam discovered that the L.A. Leggers, a running enthusiasts group, offered free training to couch potatoes. Today she trains two sessions a week for 45 minutes and makes one long run on Saturday.

"We get lectures from orthopedic doctors, nurses, yoga instructors, and nutritionists," she says. "And sometimes when I feel like 'Oh, six o'clock, I don't want to go out there,' someone else is on an up and can help pull me through. We do that for each other. In everything I do, I try to surround myself with people like that."

Miriam's approach to running comes from a place of

serene strength and honest self examination: "I approach my running in the same way that I do my work and my life. What's most important is that I give it my best shot. I understand that one success builds upon another, step by step. If I just do what's in front of me and don't compare the results to someone else, I'll be a winner."

The View Park resident is winning her battle against breast cancer, too. Last July, she went in for her usual mammogram. When results revealed a tiny lump in her breast, she turned fear into immediate action. She underwent a lumpectomy, and has felt great ever since. "I don't believe in illness," she says. "I told myself I was going to run through this one, too."

"For me, running a marathon is like fighting breast cancer: The only way out is doing it one step at a time."

When we got right down to the nitty gritty of what it's actually like to run a marathon, Miriam talks the talk and walks the walk.

"I've run four L.A. marathons and a total of 11 in four years. The actual run is a very interesting mental and physical challenge. First off, I make sure that I get enough water. By the time you feel thirsty, it's too late. Your muscles will just lock up. I drink at least eight good gulps of water a mile. I keep my 'mind talk' positive. That's especially important for me when I 'hit the wall.'"

"For me, hitting the wall is when my mind talk becomes really negative. A little voice inside starts to say 'what am I doing here, ouch, oh my leg, my back, I can't do this.' I hit that wall on every marathon somewhere between the 18th and 22nd mile. That's when I have to gut it out, and counter every negative thought with a positive one. Once I pass through that wall I know I can do it."

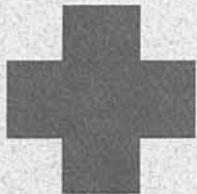
If training and running a marathon can be put into, as Miriam calls it — a metaphor for living — we might assume that by pushing our limits, often we find things in ourselves that we didn't even know we were



Miriam Simmons

Bleeding Hearts

MTA EMPLOYEES DONATE RECORD AMOUNT OF BLOOD



American Red Cross



MTA employees at the 818 facility, along with their 12th floor neighbors, SCAG, held this summer's American Red Cross Blood Drive.

Twenty-plus floor coordinators spent two weeks gathering names. The success of their pitches would be the envy of any used car salesperson worth their salt!

112 employees showed up to donate blood and an actual 92 pints of the precious liquid parted company with their former owners. This represents about 400 saved lives, making it the most successful blood drive the Red Cross has had in downtown L.A. so far this year.

A hearty congratulations to all the floor coordinators who contributed to the success of the blood drive and many, many thanks to all you wonderful donors who bled for the cause! ■

METRO ACCESS FROM PAGE 4

is unable to complete by regular bus or rail. Her daily commute to the 425 Building fell into that category, because she is unable to negotiate the transfers required to use regular fixed route service.

When Trigg wants to use Metro Access on a route for which she is eligible, she simply phones 1-800-827-0829 two hours before pick-up.

"I like the service," says Trigg, refreshed from the morning commute. "The van pulls up for me every weekday at 6:15 a.m. We get to use the carpool lane, and I get to work a lot more rested and relaxed."

Trigg, who is as big an MTA fan as she is a Dodger booster, also counts among her blessings the \$100 a month she saves on gas and car maintenance.

At 4:20 p.m. the van pulls onto the mezzanine level of the 425 building, and 15 minutes later, the eight-year MTA veteran is well on her way home.

Carrington, who is working on her master's degree in public administration at the University of LaVerne,



Brynn Kernaghan from the South Bay Area Team donating blood.



Metrolink Update

Average daily ridership in July was 8,130.

says the next area slated for Metro Access service is the Westside and central portions of Los Angeles. This area of approximately 2.5 million has about 25,000 people who are "paratransit eligible." The service, under MTA's Donna Barrett's coordination, may begin this fall.

Other members of the MTA's Metro Access team include Administrator Richard DeRock, Chip Hazen, Deidre Heitman, Ellen Blackman, and Richard Majeske. They are committed to implementing the paratransit requirements of the ADA and coordinating and improving the operations and cost-effectiveness of the more than 300 public, private, and not-for-profit paratransit providers in the county.

What makes Carrington so committed to the program? "I enjoy getting the disabled involved in life," she says firmly.

"Let's put it this way," she continues, after a pause. "If a disabled person has a problem with community services, it's not going to be due to transportation — at least not if I have anything to do with it." ■



If Child Care Centers Are Not for You . . .

by Jeannette Guerra, MTA Dependent Care Coordinator

We have talked many times about the advantages and disadvantages of child care centers. This time, I'll provide a brief overview of other child care options that you as a parent may consider. If you choose not to place your child in a child care center, you may want to consider in-home care, family day care homes, or relatives.

These child care options are as follow:

In-home care: Often preferred by parents for infants and toddlers; adult oriented; familiar setting in child's home; usually a one-to-one adult-to-child ratio.

Advantages: fewer morning hassles (such as having to drop off child at the sitter's); fewer problems of illness (because there is no contact with other ill children); sitter often does light housecleaning and cooking.

Disadvantages: costly; some loss of privacy (especially if sitter lives with you); hidden expenses (food and utilities used by sitter); less social contact with other children.

Family day care home: This arrangement provides a home-like setting for children. The limit for the number of children cared for is usually 5-6 children. It may range up to 10-12 children, for large family day care homes. It may or may not be licensed which is based on the number of families served.

Advantages: least costly of day care options; ability to play with other children; extended family, caring adult, home feeling and setting.

Disadvantages: exposure to illnesses; if unlicensed, parents are responsible for seeing that the house is safe and not overcrowded.

Relatives: Nearly half of all working mothers use this arrangement. A child is cared for in either his/her own homes or a relative's home. Relatives are generally not licensed.

Advantages: Familiar home setting; familiar adult; may be least costly of child care options.

Disadvantages: Family disagreement may arise (dif-

ferences in how to raise child); less social contact with other children; if relative is unlicensed and care is in the relative's home, parents are responsible for ensuring that the house is safe.

If you do not feel that the above child care options are necessary and feel that your child is old enough and responsible enough to care for him/herself, you may want to consider self-care.

Self care: While this is usually not a recommended option, it may be appropriate for responsible teenagers. In this arrangement, children are left alone, generally during before or after school hours.

Advantages: No cost; may foster a sense of responsibility with child if child is of appropriate age and has some support system.

Disadvantages: Child is alone without supervision; may experience fear, is vulnerable to crime and delinquent activities; high rate of accidents for children age 12 and under without supervision.

The Dependent Care Office may direct you to appropriate licensed in-home care and family day care providers available in any zip code within Southern California. If you would like more information, call the Dependent Care Office at (213) 972-7155. ■



The Free-est Show on Earth

NEW MOMS AND DADS, STEP RIGHT UP.

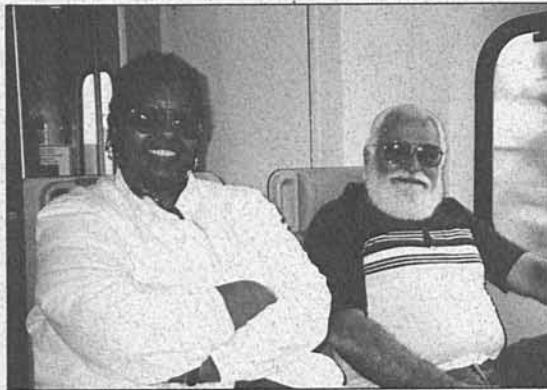
Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is giving away free circus tickets to all babies born in 1993. Offered in celebration of 200 years of circus in America, the tickets can be used at any point in the child's lifetime — at any of Ringling's 1,075 annual shows nationwide. To obtain a gift certificate redeemable for the free ticket, send a letter of request with your name and address, and your child's name and date of birth, to Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, P.O. Box 5265, Clifton, NJ 07015. ■

A Day on the Rails

by Jay Fuhrman, Employee Transportation Coordinator

MTA's employee transportation coordinators (ETCs) recently attended a special field trip to acquaint them with the region's rapidly growing rail and transit network.

During the course of the half-day trip, ETCs sampled all three rail modes in the region — heavy rail (Red Line), light rail (Blue Line) and commuter rail (Metrolink).



Enjoying the lift: ETCs Jewell Junior and Harry Finley

"A lot of our ETCs, especially those who work near downtown, need to be familiar with all of the rail options our employees have," said rail technical support secretary Jo Anna Ambrozich, who came up with the idea of conducting the field trip. "This way we could give our employees accurate information about fares, transfers and connections, based

on our first-hand experiences."

The day started promptly at eight for the ETCs, who were given a special tour of Division 20 by Associate Engineer Rob Chappell. From Union Station the group took the Metrolink to Claremont and back to Union Station.

"This was the first time I'd taken Metrolink and I was really impressed with it," said TOS and Division 2 ETC Milton Jackson. "It's really fast."

"It's so exciting, I can hardly control myself," joked mechanic and Division 9 ETC Harry Finley. "Can I get one by my house?"

At Union Station, the ETCs then made the convenient transfer to the Red Line, which they took to Metro Center. "This was my first time on the Red Line and it's terrific," enthused ETC Juanita Wright.

Wright, who is a staff assistant at Division 18, continued, "I can't wait until the rail system is all built. It will really complement our existing bus fleet."

At Metro Center, the ETCs transferred to the Blue Line, which they took to the Slauson Station. "The Blue Line is great, too," said ETC Frank Cole, who is a TOS at Division 6. "But let's eat!"

After enjoying a well-deserved lunch, and learning about the history of rail in Los Angeles, the group took the Red Line back to Division 20 before resuming work.

"We have so many different rail and bus lines coming in right near us," exclaimed Manuel Guerra, Division 3 ETC. "This trip was great because now we can give our employees accurate information so they know what options are available."

Editor's Note: The MTA Employee Transportation coordinators (ETCs) are trained to help employees arrange rideshare matches. Incentive programs include employee vanpools, preferred parking, guaranteed ride home (GRH), monthly raffles, telecommuting, bicycling, walking, etc.

If you have further questions or need assistance, please call your work site ETC:

Division 1	Dan Ruiz	2-6251
Division 2	Milton Jackson	2-6202
Division 3	Manuel Guerra	2-6203
Division 5	Sandra Royster	2-6305
Division 6	Frank Cole	2-6406
Division 7	Steve Crawford	2-6343
Division 8	Paul Terrazas	2-6308
Division 9	Harry Finley	2-6309
Division 10	Mike Ortega	2-6310
Division 11	Rick Flores	310-816-5597
Division 12	Patsy Goens	2-6212
Division 15	Freeman Crutchfield	2-6315
Division 16	Dwight Forell	2-6316
Division 18	Juanita Wright	2-6318
Division 20	Jo Anna Ambrozich	2-3282
Transit Police	Michelle Berry	2-3684
South Park	Bob Skarseth	2-7064
CMF	Helen Miller-Ray	2-5785
425 Building	Jay Fuhrman	2-4827
818 Building	Debra Hori	4-6853

Bits and Pieces



**KECIA WASHINGTON
PASSES BAR EXAM**

Kecia Washington, an inter-governmental relations analyst who represents the agency's interests in the state Legislature, has passed the California Bar Exam. The Altadena resident graduated from UCLA Law School in

Kecia Washington from UCLA Law School in May 1991 and took the Bar last February.

"It was extreme excitement," she says after learning the results in May. "Now I don't have to study anymore in the summer!"

While taking the Bar in Pasadena, Washington sat several rows from the man who suffered the much talked-about epileptic seizure: "It just makes you think about what's really important," she says.

Washington, who joined the MTA after graduating from law school, hopes to eventually practice and is now "studying the options." She received her undergraduate degree from U.C. Berkeley.



POTES-FELLOW HONORED

Clara Potes-Fellow, an MTA media relations specialist, has been awarded the 1993 Community Service Award by the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).

Clara Potes-Fellow

The organization recognized Potes-Fellow's work as an MTA spokesperson for the Hispanic community.

"She enables this community to be aware of what its tax dollars are being used for and, in doing so, creates the opportunity for the community to participate," said former SHPE President Rod Garcia, at the annual banquet held in June.

The group also recognized her work as spokesperson

for the Clinton/Gore presidential campaign in 1992. Potes-Fellow was California coordinator of press relations for Hispanic media during the general election.

The former reporter for La Opinion won the Inter-American Press Association Journalism Award in 1990 for an investigation on the money transmitters industry. The story resulted in the enactment of new legislation introduced by Assemblyman Richard Polanco.

The award was presented by MTA Chairman Richard Alatorre.

PLANNERS BLAIR AND HEIT RECOGNIZED

Planners Robin Blair and Karen Heit, both of whom created a master plan for development in the Westlake/MacArthur Park Red Line Station area, were recently honored by the American Planning Association (APA) for achievement in project planning and for innovative use of technology.

The two received their awards June 23 at the APA awards banquet at the Les Freres Taix Restaurant in Los Angeles.

The "Innovative Use of Technology" award recognizes Blair and Heit's technical development of a computer pedestrian simulator, used to assist planners in preserving and enhancing sidewalk space. The simulator was designed to demonstrate the impact of Red and Blue Line patrons on surrounding sidewalks.

Blair and Heit's "Principles and Alternatives: Conceptual Master Plan for the Westlake/MacArthur Park Red Line Station Area" earned this year's "Outstanding Planning Project" award. Blair and Heit coordinated the joint efforts between the MTA, Kaplan-McLaughlin-Diaz Architects and Barrio Planners, Inc., to create the award-winning master plan.

Both Blair and Heit have been with the MTA for four years. ■



*Robin Blair
and Karen Heit*

Employee Involvement Program Update

NEED A BOOK?
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MTA NEWS

MTA News is printed on recycled paper.



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Thanks to a suggestion from Vic Kamhi, project manager for the South Bay Area Team, MTA employees working at the 818 Building who don't have the time to trek to the library on the fifth floor of the 425 Building, can now fax or call in their request. Dorothy Gray, MTA's librarian, says a copy of the library's automated catalogue along with a fax machine have been installed on the 11th floor near the Artesia Room. Gray says a courier will bring the requested book within 24 hours. The fax number is 2-7955.



Vic Kamhi

Editor's Note: The Employee Involvement Program — called Employee Suggestion Program by former SCRTDers — is alive and well! Contact Linda Riemer with an idea that benefits the MTA by reducing costs, increasing productivity, and improving service to the public. She can be reached at 4-7180 or drop an idea into one of the suggestion boxes on each floor in the 818 building. ■

MTA Hotline

Do you have an idea or suggestion to make the MTA a better place? Concerned about what's going on at your worksite?

Call the MTA Hotline. Available 24 hours, 7 days a week, your anonymity assured. But if you wish, receipt of your call can be confirmed within 24 hours and you can receive weekly updates until resolution is reached.

Callers requesting feedback are assured that their identities will remain confidential information. ■

MIRIAM SIMMONS FROM PAGE 7

looking for. When we push the very outer edge of those limits and go beyond the wall, we enter a place that is defined only by what we ourselves consider valuable and we can extract immense personal rewards from that experience. Just ask Miriam.

Editor's note: As soon as Miriam's breast cancer was diagnosed, she told her colleagues, urging them to get mammograms. The results paid off — mammograms diagnosed easy-to-treat lumps in at least two of her co-workers. ■



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